Calcium sulfite: The hidden food preservative you need to know about

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Tags: badfood, badhealth, Calcium Sulfite, clean food watch, Dangerous, food additives, food science, food supply, frankenfood, grocery, junk food, poison, products, stop eating poison, synthetic preservatives, toxic chemicals, toxic foods, toxic ingredients, toxins

- Calcium sulfite is a synthetic preservative widely used in processed foods to prevent oxidation, inhibit microbial growth, maintain color and extend shelf life, but it offers no nutritional benefits and may pose health risks.

- It is produced industrially via the reaction of sulfur dioxide with calcium hydroxide. Although sulfites have been used historically, their widespread use grew with the rise of processed foods in the 20th century.

- Health concerns include allergic reactions, gut issues and neurological effects, particularly for sensitive individuals and those with asthma, despite FDA labeling requirements and partial bans on sulfites.

- Common foods containing calcium sulfite include dried fruits, alcoholic beverages, seafood, deli meats, baked goods, pre-cut vegetables and processed snacks, often hidden under vague labels like “preservative.”

- Consumers seeking clean eating and detoxification should be cautious of calcium sulfite and similar additives, as they prioritize shelf life over health and may contribute to chronic health problems.

For decades, sulfites, including calcium sulfite, have been quietly lurking in our food supply, praised by the food industry for their preservative powers but increasingly scrutinized by health-conscious consumers. While government agencies like the *Food and Drug Administration* (FDA) and *U.S. Department of Agriculture* (USDA) have long classified sulfites as "generally recognized as safe" (GRAS), mounting research and real-world health reactions tell a different story.

Unlike natural preservatives like rosemary extract, calcium sulfite is a synthetic additive, part of a class of sulfur-based compounds used to extend shelf life, prevent browning and inhibit bacterial growth. But at what cost to your health?

The chemistry behind calcium sulfite

According to *Brighteon.AI's* Enoch, calcium sulfite (CaSO?) is an inorganic salt derived from sulfur dioxide (SO?), a gas commonly used in food processing. It belongs to the sulfite family, which also includes sodium sulfite (E221), sodium bisulfite (E222), potassium bisulfite (E228) and sulfur dioxide (E220).

Unlike its more common counterparts, such as sodium sulfite and sulfur dioxide, calcium sulfite is less soluble in water, making it particularly useful in dry food applications where controlling moisture is important. Industrially, calcium sulfite is produced by bubbling sulfur

dioxide through a calcium hydroxide (slaked lime) solution, which causes calcium sulfite to precipitate as a white powder. This is a chemical process designed for mass food production rather than occurring naturally or benefiting human health.

Sulfites have a long history of use in food preservation. The Romans burned sulfur to preserve wine, and medieval brewers used it to prevent beer from spoiling. However, industrial-scale use of sulfites grew significantly during the 20th century, coinciding with the rise of processed foods in the 1920s to 1950s, the fast-food boom from the 1960s to the 1980s, and the expansion of global food distribution networks from the 1990s onward. By the 1980s, sulfites were present in nearly every dried fruit, wine and packaged snack.

Consumer concerns eventually led the FDA to require sulfite labeling in 1986 and to ban sulfites in fresh fruits and vegetables in 1988. Despite these regulations, calcium sulfite remains legal in many processed foods, often concealed under vague terms such as "preservative" or "anti-browning agent."

The food industry favors calcium sulfite because it effectively prevents oxidation, keeping apples from browning and fried foods from going rancid, while also inhibiting microbial growth to stop mold and bacteria in dried fruits, wines and baked goods. Additionally, it helps maintain color by keeping shrimp pink, guacamole green and deli meats looking fresh, and extends shelf life, allowing foods to remain in warehouses and on shelves for months or even years. (Related: Buyer beware: Your fruit juices may be FULL of heavy metals.)

However, calcium sulfite offers no nutritional value. Unlike natural preservatives such as vitamin C, rosemary extract or salt, it does not contribute any vitamins, minerals or antioxidant activity, does not support gut health or immunity, and is not essential for human metabolism. In fact, calcium sulfite may even pose health risks, particularly for sensitive individuals.

Health risks and toxicity of calcium sulfite

While the FDA claims sulfites are "safe for most people," the reality is far more concerning. Research and real-world cases link the following to sulfite consumption:

Severe allergic reactions

- Sulfite sensitivity affects one percent of the general population but up to 10 percent of asthmatics. Its symptoms include hives, itching, swelling (mild reactions), wheezing, asthma attacks (common in sulfite-sensitive individuals) and anaphylaxis, or life-threatening shock (rare but documented).

Gut dysbiosis and digestive distress

- Sulfites kill beneficial gut bacteria, contributing to leaky gut syndrome, SIBO (small intestinal bacterial overgrowth) and chronic inflammation.

Neurological and behavioral effects

- Sulfites deplete thiamine (vitamin B1), which is critical for nerve function. It also has possible links to ADHD-like symptoms (hyperactivity, brain fog), migraines and headaches (common in sulfite-sensitive individuals), and neurodegenerative risks (long-term exposure may contribute to oxidative stress).

Common foods containing calcium sulfite

Calcium sulfite is not as widespread as sodium sulfite or sulfur dioxide, but it still appears in:

Alcoholic beverages

- Wine, especially white and sweet wines
- Beer and cider
- Dried fruit-infused alcohols (e.g., raisin rum, apricot brandy)

Dried and processed fruits

- Dried apples, apricots, peaches, pears (often treated to prevent browning)
- Raisins and sultanas (especially non-organic)
- Candied fruits (used in baking)

Baked goods and snacks

- Pre-made doughs (biscuits, pie crusts)
- Potato chips and French fries (prevents rancidity)
- Crackers and cookies (extends freshness)

Seafood and deli meats

- Shrimp and lobster (keeps them "pink" and "fresh" looking)
- Processed meats (some sausages, deli slices)

Pre-cut and packaged vegetables

- Pre-shredded lettuce, coleslaw mixes (though less common since the 1988 ban)
- Frozen potatoes (hash browns, fries)

Condiments and sauces

- Pickles and olives (preservative in some brands)
- Salad dressings and marinades

Miscellaneous processed foods

- Gelatin and fruit snacks
- Dehydrated soups and instant noodles

Calcium sulfite is just one of thousands of food additives that prioritize shelf life over human health. While the industrial food complex continues to push these chemicals, informed consumers have the power to reject them.

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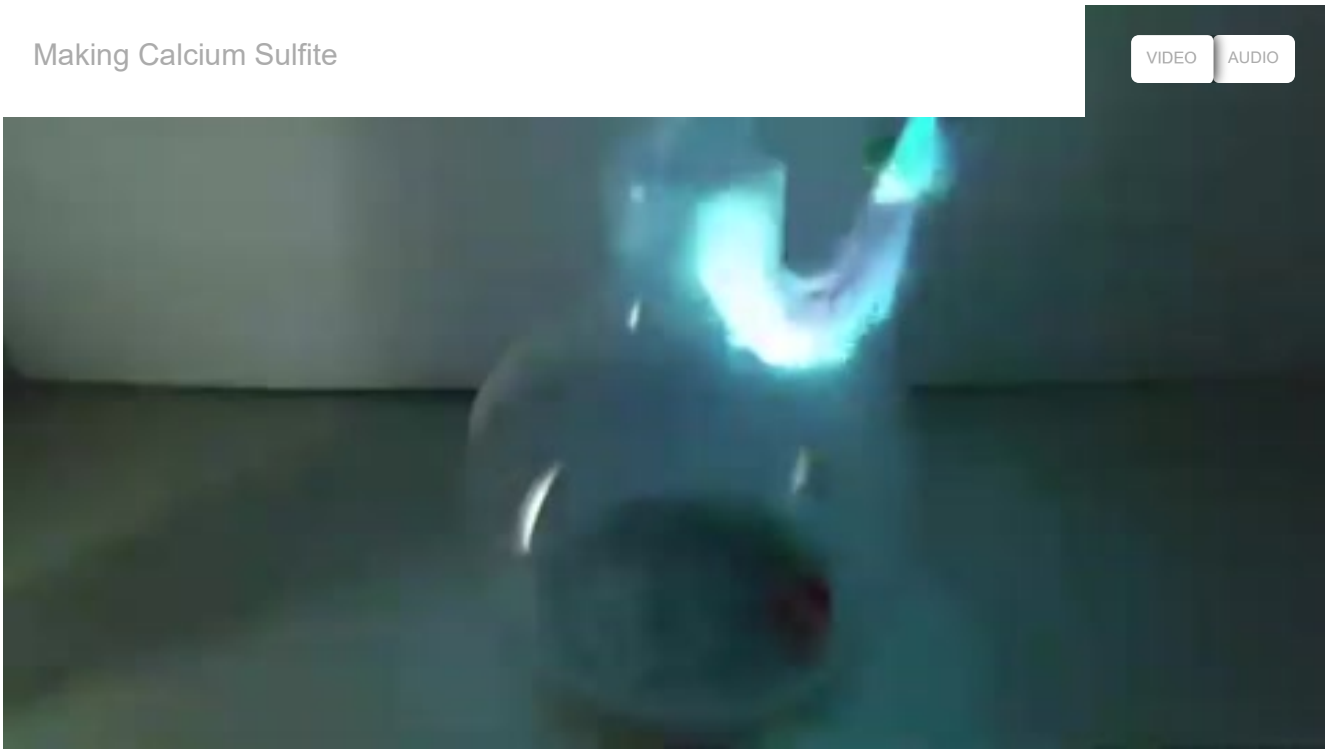
Watch this video to learn more about calcium sulfite.



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